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ABSTRACT

The involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) with both United States and foreign news media has been recorded in numerous publications. This report reviews the important aspects of the CIA-press relationships as they have appeared in print and discusses the implications of these relationsihps for the credibility of the press. Media reaction to these disclosures is considered and the ethical dimensions of the CIA-press involvement analyzed. The report includes a summary of the measures taken by Congressional subcommittees concerning this subject. (MAI)

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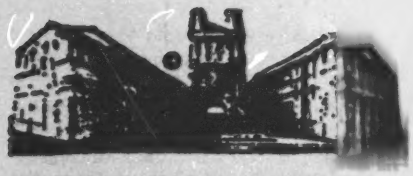

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION CENTER REPORT NO. 364

THE CIA AND THE PRESS

This report was written by Bernardo A. Carvalho, an M.A. candidate at the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

Introduction

The years 1975 and 1976 were marked by extensive revelations about CIA activities both in the United States and abroad.

Worries about the CIA were much older. In 1967, for example, President Johnson designated a special commission to investigate the agency's activities. But such investigations came to a peak in 1975-76, when eight congressional committees were studying the agency at the same time.

Out of these investigations came a series of disclosures about relationships between the CIA and several media, in the United States and abroad. Although the agency refused to give the names of most of those involved and stonewalled subsequent investigations by some of the American media, enough information emerged to show how extensive this relationship was. (The Pike report said that media and propaganda projects are possibly the largest single category of covert action projects undertaken by the CIA.)

More or less at the same time, several other sources provided information about the CIA's activities, including its relationships with the media. Victor Marchetti, John Marks and Philip Agee wrote books, CIA documents were released under the Freedom of Information Act, and some media published articles on the subject.

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the important aspects of the CIA-press relationships that have been disclosed so far, to discuss the implications of these relationships, to analyze the reaction of the media to the disclosures, and to show what has been done and what might be done by Congress.

The word "press" will be used to refer essentially to newspapers, magazines and news agencies. Occasional references will be made to CIA activities in the fields of broadcasting, book publishing and printing of pamphlets, but this is not the primary concern here.

The Church Report

On Jan. 27, 1975, the Senate established a select committee to study the intelligence activities of the United States. The committee's report was published on April 26, 1976.[1] It charges:

> In pursuing its foreign intelligence mission the Central Intelligence Agency has used the U.S. media for both the collection of intelligence and cover. Until February 1976, when it announced a new policy toward U.S. media personnel, the CIA maintained covert relationships with about 50 American journalists or employees of U.S. media organizations. They are part of a network of several hundred foreign individuals around the world who provide intelligence for the CIA and at times attempt to influence foreign opinion through the use of covert propaganda. These individuals provide the CIA with direct access to a large number of foreign newspapers and periodicals, scores of press services and news agencies, radio and television stations, commercial book publishers, and other foreign media outlets.[2]

The report says that the CIA has been particularly sensitive to the charge that CIA covert relationships with the American media jeopardize the credibility of the American press and risk the possibility of propagandizing the American public. Former CIA Director William Colby expressed this concern in his testimony before the House Select Committee on Intelligence:

> We have taken particular caution to ensure that our operations are focused abroad and not at the United States in order (not) to influence the opinion of the American people about things from a CIA point of view.[3]

The publicity that in 1967 surrounded several CIA sponsored organizations (especially the National Student Association) and threatened to expose others, caused the CIA to act quickly to limit its use of U. S. publishers. (Until then, according to the report, well over a thousand books had been produced, subsidized or sponsored by the CIA, about 25 percent of them in English.) In direct response to the Katzenbach report (which followed an investigation asked by President Johnson),[4] Deputy Director for Plans Desmond FitzGerald said, "We will, under no circumstances, publish books, magazines or newspapers in the United States."[5]

Summary: The CIA's involvement with both American and foreign news media has been exhaustively set forth in numerous publications. That involvement, the reaction of American media to its disclosure, and the measures taken by Congress concerning this subject, are summarized here.

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With this order, the Church report says, the CIA suspended direct publication and subsidization within the United States of not only books, but also journals and periodicals including "a magazine published by a United States private entity for foreign distribution, a foreign publication of United States origin, and a publication or book originally published in the United States." (The names of these publications were not released.)

On Feb. 11, 1976, the CIA announced new guidelines governing its relationships with U. S. media organizations:

> Effective immediately, CIA will not enter into any paid or contractual relationship with any full-time or part-time news correspondent accredited by any U. S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio or television network or station.[7]

According to the report, of approximately 50 U. S. journalists or personnel of U. S. media organizations who were employed by the CIA or maintained some kind of covert relationship with the CIA at the time of the announcement, fewer than one-half would be terminated under the new CIA guidelines.

Colby identified four basic groups of U. S. journalists involved with the CIA. They are listed below, with the conclusions the Church committee reached about them.

1) Staff of general circulation, U. S. news organizations. This category would include any staff member of a general circulation U. S. news organization who functions as a paid undercover contact of the CIA. It appears to be virtually phased out. The committee found only two current relationships that fit this category, both of which were being terminated under the CIA's Feb. 11, 1976 stated policy.

The committee also found a small number of past relationships that fit this category. In some cases the cover arrangement consisted of reimbursing a U. S. newspaper for any articles written by a CIA agent and used by the paper. In at least one case, the journalistic functions assumed by a CIA staff officer for cover purposes grew to a point where the officer concluded that he could not satisfactorily serve the requirements of both his (unwitting) U. S. media employers and the CIA, and he therefore resigned from the CIA. He maintained contact, however, with the CIA and continued, very occasionally, to report to the agency from the countries in which he worked.

2) Staff of small, or limited circulation, U. S. publications. Of the less than ten relationships with writers for small, or limited circulation, U. S. publications such as trade journals or newsletters, most were for cover purposes.

3) Free-lance journalists; "stringers" for newspapers, news magazines and news services; itinerant authors; propaganda writers; and agents working under cover as employees of U. S. publishing houses abroad. With the exception of the last group, the majority of the individuals in this, the largest, category are bona fide writers or journalists or photographers. Most are paid by the CIA, and virtually all are aware that the agency is the source of the money they receive. Few, however, of the news organizations to which they contribute know of their CIA relationships.

4) Journalists with whom the CIA maintains unpaid, occasional, covert contact. Journalists in this category have the same kind of contact with the CIA that journalists have with any other department of the U. S. government in the routine performance of their journalistic duties. No money changes hands. The relationships usually are limited to occasional lunches, interviews or telephone conversations, during which information is exchanged or verified. The difference, of course, is that the relationships are covert. The journalist either volunteers or is requested by the CIA to provide some sort of information about people with whom he is in contact. In several cases, the relationship began when the journalist approached a U. S. official to report, or be debriefed on, his travels in a foreign country. Usually, the official in charge of the journalist's area of interest was informed of the contact.

The Church committee was concerned with the "potential inherent in covert media operations for manipulating or inadvertently misleading the American public." This "fallout" (or boomerang effect) in the United States from a foreign publication supported by the CIA was considered "inevitable and consequently permissible" by FitzGerald in his 1967 order prohibiting CIA publications in this country.

The Church report specifies the sources for domestic fallout of covert propaganda: books intended primarily for an English-speaking foreign audience; press placements that are picked up by international wire services; press services controlled by the CIA; and direct funding of foreign institutions that attempt to propagandize the United States public and Congress.

At least once, a book review for an agency book that appeared in the New York Times was written by a CIA writer under contract, according to the report. It also says that Howard Hunt, who had been in charge of contacts with U. S. publishers in the late 1960's, acknowledged in testimony before the committee that CIA books circulated in the U. S. and that such fallout may not have been unintentional.

Another example of the damages of "fallout" mentioned by the report involved two proprietary news services that the CIA maintained in Europe. Inevitably, these news services had U. S. subscribers. The larger of the two was subscribed to by over 30 U. S. newspapers. In an effort to reduce the problem of fallout, the CIA made a senior official at the major U. S. dailies aware that the CIA controlled these two press services.

CIA records for the September-October 1970 propaganda effort in Chile indicate that "replay" of propaganda in the U. S. was not unexpected. A CIA cable summary for Sept. 25, 1970, reported:

> Sao Paulo, Tegucigalpa, Buenos Aires, Lima, Montevideo, Bogota, Mexico City report continued replay of Chile theme materials. Items also carried in New York Times, Washington Post. Propaganda activities continue to generate good coverage of Chile developments along our theme guidance.[9]

Some fallout situations may cause the CIA to propagandize the American public, area study specialists, Congress, the U. S. government or the CIA itself! (See the section on Marchetti and Marks.) The Church report gives examples of these situations.

The CIA provided $170,000 per year in 1974 and 1975 for the support of a Vietnamese institution's publications. The embassy in the United States distributed the magazine to American readers, including the offices of all United States congressmen. The institution on one occasion invited a group of American congressmen to Vietnam and sponsored their activities on at least part of the trip. Through this institution, the CIA — however inadvertently — engaged in propagandizing the American public, including its Congress, on the controversial issue of U. S. involvement in Vietnam.

The CIA can act upon the U. S. government especially through the fallout of black propaganda.[10] The Church report says:

> Because the source of black propaganda is so

fully concealed, the CIA recognizes that it risks seriously misleading U. S. policy-makers. An Agency regulation specifies that the Directorate of Operations should notify appropriate elements of the DDI [Directorate for Intelligence] and the Intelligence Community if the results of a black operation might influence the thinking of "senior U. S. officials" or affect [illegible] protect the U. S. public and the Congress from falling [illegible] propaganda or any other propaganda."

The committee report concludes its chapter on CIA covert relationships with the United States media by expressing concern over the damage to the credibility and independence of a free press that may be caused by those covert relationships. It says:

> The Committee recognizes that other countries make extensive use of the international media for their propaganda purposes. The United States public is not insulated from this propaganda either. It is clear, however, that the strongest defense a free country has from propaganda of any kind is a free and vigorous press that expresses diverse points of view. Similarly, the most effective way for this country to respond to the use of propaganda abroad is to permit American journalists and news organizations to pursue their work without jeopardizing their credibility in the eyes of the world through covert use of them.[12]

In its recommendations, the Church committee says about covert actions (of which propaganda is a part):

> . . . Covert actions should be consistent with publicly-defined United States foreign policy goals, and should be reversed for extraordinary circumstances when no other means will suffice. . . .[13]

The Pike Report

The House Select Committee on Intelligence, chaired by New York Congressman Otis Pike, finished its report on Jan. 19, 1976. Ten days later, the House of Representatives voted not to release it until it had been censored by the Executive branch.

However, the report was leaked to then-CBS reporter Daniel Schorr, who passed it on to the Village Voice, which published a trimmed version of the first two parts of the report.[14] The third part of the report, "Recommendations," had not been written at that time.

The section on "Covert Action," subsection "Media and Propaganda," says:

> . . . It is believed that if the correct number of all media and propaganda projects could be determined, it would exceed Election Support as the largest single category of covert action projects undertaken by the CIA.
>
> Activities have included support of friendly media, major propaganda efforts, insertion of articles into the local press and distribution of books and leaflets. By far the largest single recipient has been a European publishing house funded since 195[illegible] . . . About 25 percent of the program has been directed at the Soviet bloc, in the publication and clandestine import and export of Western and Soviet dissident literature.[15]

In the section on "Intelligence Collection," the subsection on "Manipulation of the Media" starts by saying that

[illegible]

The report says that intelligence agencies have long prized journalists as informants and identity-covers. The reason is that newsmen generally enjoy great mobility and are often admitted to areas denied to ordinary businessmen or to suspected intelligence types. And, the report notes, "They also have extraordinary access to important foreign leaders and diplomats."[16]

The Pike report says that full-time foreign correspondents for major U. S. publications have worked concurrently for the CIA, passing along information received in the normal course of their regular jobs "and even, on occasion, traveling to otherwise non-newsworthy areas to acquire data."[17] But far more prevalent, according to the committee, is the agency's practice of retaining free-lancers and stringers as informants.

The committee also said that employers back in the U. S. usually did not know about their employees being used by the CIA, and that they have not been able to obtain information on this matter from the agency. The deputy director of operations at the CIA explained that the agency wants as few people as possible to know its sources. Therefore, the CIA considers stringers and free-lancers to be free agents, working for many employers, and so there is no necessity for the CIA to inform a stringer's or free-lancer's publisher of his other employer — the CIA. Besides, "newsmen-informants apparently do not often disclose this relationship to their editors,"[20] the committee said.

The Pike report says that the CIA acknowledges that stringers and others with whom the agency has a relationship are often directed to insert agency-composed "news" articles into foreign publications and wire services.

In discussing the problem of "fallout," the report says that

> CIA insensitivity to the possibility of its adultering news digested by Americans is indicated by its frequent manipulation of Reuters wire service dispatches — which regularly appear in U. S. media. Because Reuters is British, it is considered fair game.[21]

(Colby told the committee that he differentiates between the Associated Press and Reuters. "I consider AP to be an American wire service and therefore off limits . . . but Reuters is a foreign wire service," he said.)[22]

A number of CIA officers employed by U. S. and foreign publications write nothing at all, according to the report. Their journalistic affiliation is a "cover" — "a sham arrangement making possible full-time clandestine work for the Agency. With these arrangements, the employer's cooperation has been obtained."[23]

The CIA's cover and commercial staff files show that in 1975, 11 CIA employees used media cover with 15 news field companies — TV, radio, newspapers and magazines. Five of these are of "major general news impact," nine of "no major general news influence," and one a proprietary, the report

says.

According to the report, Director Colby ordered a review of [illegible] relationships in the aftermath of disclosures [illegible] CIA-media relationships in 1973. The report [illegible] Consequently, the Agency terminated the [illegible] relationships of three full-time employees of major American periodicals. Stringers and free-lancers are still on the payroll, despite their periodic reporting for a U. S. media (which is) usually unaware of the writer's CIA connection.[26]

Colby told the committee that, when the CIA had fiduciary relations with five full-time correspondents of major American news organizations, three of their employers were unwitting.

The report finishes by saying:

> The use of American press enterprises as a cover has been tightened somewhat. . . . Director Colby, citing the Agency's continuing need for reliable information and the increasing reluctance of private firms and the government to provide cover, has maintained that the recent reforms have reduced risks to an acceptable level.[26]

Marchetti and Marks

In their book **The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence**,[26] the first book to be censored in the United States in 200 years, Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks have a chapter on "Propaganda and Disinformation."

This chapter starts by telling how, in 1967, the CIA used balloons to spread propaganda materials — leaflets, pamphlets, newspapers — over mainland China. The balloons were sent from Taiwan, with Chiang Kai-shek's regime as the "agency's witting and cooperative host for the operation."[27] A pair of clandestine radio transmitters also was installed in Taiwan.

The authors say that sometimes the CIA has deceived not only the American public, press, academia and government, but also the CIA itself. This is how they describe one such situation:

> . . . Unlike most of the intelligence collected by the agency, the programs monitored by the FBIS [the CIA's Foreign Broadcast Information Service] are widely disseminated within the U. S. government and to certain subscribers among the press corps and the academic community. . . . But even though the FBIS editors are members of the CIA's Intelligence Directorate, the operators in the Clandestine Services are reluctant to reveal their propaganda operations to them. As a result, for its Far East daily report the FBIS frequently monitored and distributed the texts of programs actually originating from the agency's secret stations on Taiwan along with the transcripts of broadcasts from real counter-revolutionary organizations on the mainland. . . . Eventually the CIA analysts at home were informed of the existence of the clandestine radios, but no steps were taken to rectify the false data passed on to the other U. S. government agencies or to the press and academia; operational security precluded such revelations.[28]

Marchetti and Marks say that the United States did not actively enter the field of propaganda until World War II, when the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Office of War Information (OWI) started their psychological-warfare programs. The propaganda effort has grown — under the eyes of the Covert Action (CA) Staff of the CIA's Clandestine Services — to be thoroughly expert.

According to the book, working on the CA Staff are sociologists, psychologists, historians and media specialists — all skilled at spotting "exploitable" targets, such as the youth of [illegible], at evaluating [illegible] country, and at getting a message [illegible]

[illegible] the idea for an operation may be initiated by a field component or [illegible] of higher authority, but it often comes from the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon or any member of the U. S. intelligence community, in the form of a requirement for the CIA to take action.

Two sections of this chapter, on the "more devious" propaganda operations of the CIA and the "considerable use" the agency makes of forged documents, have been censored by the CIA. (The agency made a total of 168 deletions in the book.)

In a heavily censored section, Marchetti and Marks talk about the CIA's publishing books and periodicals. They say that, over the years, the agency has provided direct subsidies to a number of magazines and publishing houses,

> ranging from Eastern European emigre organs to such reputable firms as Frederick A. Praeger, of New York — which admitted in 1967 that it had published "fifteen or sixteen" books at the CIA's request.[29]

According to the authors, many anti-communist publishing concerns in Germany, Italy and France also were supported and encouraged by the agency during the post-World War II years. The names of these "publishing concerns" have been deleted by the CIA, but there is a reference to the Parisian newspaper **Le Combat** at the end of a deleted sentence.

A very interesting revelation made by Marchetti and Marks is that, according to a former high-ranking CIA official, the agency subsidized for several years the New York communist paper, **The Daily Worker**, by secretly purchasing several thousand prepaid subscriptions. "The CIA apparently hoped to demonstrate by this means to the American public that the threat of communism in this country was indeed real,"[31] the authors say.

Marchetti and Marks say the CIA has no specific authority by law to engage in covert propaganda operations, other than the vague charge to carry out "such other functions and duties related to intelligence affecting the national security as the National Security Council may from time to time direct."

> Yet since its founding in 1947 the CIA has spent over one billion dollars for propaganda activities (mainly foreign but also domestic) to further what it perceived to be the national interests of the United States.
>
> Sometimes this means simply telling the truth to an audience (called "white" propaganda); other times a mixture of truths, half-truths, and slight distortions is used to slant the views of the audience ("gray" propaganda); and, on occasion, outright lies ("black" propaganda) are used, although usually accompanied for credibility's sake by some truths and half-truths.[32]

The authors say, too, that in an episode involving communist forgery of documents relating to American activities abroad (1961), the CIA lied to Congress and to the American people.[33]

Another practice that, according to the authors, has had more impact in the United States than overseas is the use of defectors from communist governments for propaganda pur-

poses.

> The CIA does not try to alter the defector's writings drastically; it simply influences him to leave out certain information because of security considerations, or because the thrust of the information runs counter to existing American policy. The inclusion of information justifying U. S. or CIA practices is, of course, encouraged, and the CIA will provide whatever literary assistance is needed by the defector.[34]

Marchetti and Marks suggest that the CIA should cease its covert operations.

> . . . propaganda, subversion, manipulation of governments — should simply be discontinued. These are more often than not counterproductive and, even when successful, contrary to the most basic American ideals.[35]

Agee

In his book **Inside the Company — CIA Diary**,[36] Philip Agee mentions several news individuals and organizations that he says were subsidized, controlled or influenced by the CIA. Agee makes it clear that many of the leaders of these organizations did not know of their connection with the agency (sometimes only a few members or leaders knew it) and that some of the organizations severed relations with the CIA once the ties were revealed. Agee specifically names individuals and organizations involved with the CIA and describes how they served the agency.[37] He also describes several propaganda operations and how the press played a role in them.[38]

Bernstein

When this report was being completed, **Rolling Stone** magazine published an article by Carl Bernstein on "The CIA and the Media."[39] This article says that the relationship between the CIA and the press has been much more extensive than it has been shown by any previous publication.

> . . . more than 400 American journalists . . . in the past twenty-five years have secretly carried out assignments for the Central Intelligence Agency, according to documents on file at CIA headquarters. . . . Journalists provided a full range of clandestine services — from simple intelligence-gathering to serving as go-betweens with spies in Communist countries.[40]

Bernstein adds several names to the list of media that are supposed to have cooperated with the CIA. Among them some of the most important in the nation: Columbia Broadcasting System, Time Inc., New York **Times**, Louisville **Courier-Journal**, Copley News Service, American Broadcasting Company, the National Broadcasting Company, the Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, Hearst Newspapers, Scripps-Howard, **Newsweek** magazine, the Mutual Broadcasting System, the Miami **Herald**, the old **Saturday Evening Post** and the New York **Herald-Tribune**. Also, Bernstein makes accusations about the Church committee:

> . . . top officials of the CIA, including former directors William Colby and George Bush, persuaded the committee to restrict its inquiry into the matter [the agency's involvement with the press] and to deliberately misrepresent the actual scope of the activities in its final report.[41]

Other Sources

Stories and data about the CIA using the media (and vice versa) come from several other sources.

1) The Associated Press said (Des Moines **Register**, 2-5-77) that in 1967 the CIA directed its offices around the world "to employ propaganda assets" to counter doubts raised by critics of the Warren Commission's investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy.

The propaganda campaign was to be waged in part by passing unclassified information about the assassination to CIA "assets" who could use the material in writing "book reviews and feature articles" that would "answer and refute the attacks of the critics," according to a CIA document released under the Freedom of Information Act.

The 1967 CIA dispatch to "chiefs, certain stations and bases" says that the rash of books and articles criticizing the Warren Commission's findings

> is a matter of concern to the U. S. government, including our organization. Efforts to impugn (the) rectitude and wisdom (of commission members and staff) tend to cast doubt on the whole leadership of American society. . . . our play should point out, as applicable, that the critics are 1) wedded to theories adopted before the evidence was in, 2) politically interested, 3) financially interested, 4) hasty and inaccurate in their research, or 5) infatuated with their own theories.

2) The New York **Times** (1-25-77) discussed the ties between the CIA and the London-based Forum World Features, a news service that distributed articles to papers in Asia and Africa as well as Europe. Forum World Features ended its operations in April, 1975, when the Church and Pike committees were investigating the activities of the CIA.

3) Early in 1976, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a report containing a glimpse at the covert propaganda network of the CIA. This is probably one of the partial reports of the Church committee. Walter Pincus, of the Washington **Post**, analyzed this report and wrote an article summarizing it (Miami **Herald**, 1-16-76).

According to the article (and to the report), on Sept. 14, 1970, the Forty Committee of the National Security Council authorized a covert CIA propaganda operation to focus attention on "the damage that would befall Chile under an Allende government." Salvador Allende, a leftist, was then a candidate for president of Chile.

Less than one week later, an Inter-American Press Association news release was issued in Washington charging that freedom of the press was being jeopardized in Chile by "the Communists and their Marxist allies." The release, according to the Senate report, was a CIA product through its covert action resources.

Jim Canel, executive secretary of the association that usually writes such releases, said he had "assumed" the release had been drafted by Agustin Edwards, publisher and owner of **El Mercurio**, an anti-Allende Santiago newspaper.

In September, 1970, Edwards came to Washington to generate U. S. support for a plan to halt Allende's election, and he met with then-CIA Director Richard Helms.

On Sept. 22, **El Mercurio** carried an editorial arguing that "retention of individual freedom" was the most important matter facing the Chilean people. According to the Senate report, CIA agents on the newspaper's staff "enabled the (CIA) station to generate more than one editorial per day based on CIA guidance."

Twelve days after the Forty Committee action, the Spanish government-owned wire service, **Efe**, carried a report throughout Latin America from Santiago on an anti-Allende rally by a right-wing group called **Patria y Libertad**, which

was described in the story as "a growing . . . movement."

The same day, a Santiago radio station carried a political commentary on the Patria rally. The commentator mentioned the rally favorably, while criticizing the Christian Democratic Party, which that day had offered to make an agreement with Allende.

According to the Senate committee report, **Patria y Libertad** and its rally received some money in an "indirect subsidy" from the CIA. The radio station in Santiago and the commentator also received CIA funds. **Efe** at the time received a CIA subsidy for its Latin American newswire operations, according to a former intelligence official.

Within a month of the Forty Committee decision, 18 journalists from outside Chile, under direct or indirect agency control, had arrived in Santiago. Some were paid CIA agents working for newspapers in other countries; a few were anti-Allende and had received their transportation from CIA funds. Others were journalists who had been ordered to Chile by their bosses, described in the Senate committee report as "high-level (CIA) agents . . . in managerial capacities in the media field."

One interview with Allende was written by a correspondent of **Latin**, in 1970 a new Spanish-language wire service. **Latin** purportedly was established and run by a group of 13 Latin American newspapers that had hired the British news agency Reuters to manage the operation. According to a former intelligence agent, however, the CIA subsidized **Latin** through intermediaries in much the same manner as it gave money to **El Mercurio**.

The CIA aimed to have **Latin** as a Latin American competitor to **Prensa Latina**, the news service established in the early 1960's by Fidel Castro's Cuban government. **Latin** denied the accusation, and Reuters said it had never heard of CIA money going into **Latin**. Reuters also said it did not have anything to do with financing **Latin**.

Despite CIA's covert action and propaganda efforts, Allende was elected president of Chile in October, 1970. According to the Senate committee report, the CIA claimed its six-week propaganda blitz resulted in "726 articles, broadcasts, editorials and similar items" in Latin American and European media. An agency official who participated in the propaganda effort commented, "With the White House really leaning on us, you take advantage of every asset you have." After Allende took office, the covert propaganda operation continued.

4) The book **Who's Who in CIA**, published by Julius Mader in East Germany, lists the following as cover organizations used by the CIA in 1967:

— International Press Institute;
— Newspaper Guild of America;
— International Journalists Conference in Geneva;
— International Federation of Journalists in Brussels;
— Asian Student Press Bureau;
— National Student Press Council of India;
— West Berlin Union for the Advancement of Journalism in the Development (sic) countries;
— Radio Free Europe;
— Radio Liberation;
— Radio Free Asia.[42]

5) Stuart H. Loory said that the CIA secretly owned, for seven years, 40 percent of the Rome **Daily American**.[43]

Loory also recalled how the whole story of the CIA-press relationship (or its disclosure) started. In the fall of 1973, Jack Anderson's column reported that Seymour K. Freiden (then bureau chief for the Hearst newspapers in London) had worked for the CIA. In October and November, Colby was asked by officials of the New York **Times** and the Washington **Star-News** whether any of their staff members were receiving payments from the CIA. The latter paper printed a story about this on its front page, which was carried by wire services and run in other papers.

According to Loory, in the late 1940's and 1950's, the CIA bought the services of newsmen working for Reuters, **Agence France-Press**, **Tass**, **Hsinhua** (the Red Chinese news agency) and the staffs of dozens of newspapers around the world.

As far as CIA contacts with editorial offices in the U. S. are concerned, Loory mentioned a three-year relationship between the agency and McGraw-Hill and with the **Christian Science Monitor**.

According to Loory's article, a former executive editor of the Chicago **Daily News**, Basil Walters, issued a directive in the 1950's to all **Daily News** foreign correspondents ordering them not to moonlight for American intelligence agencies. Walters said he thought some publishers took advantage of the CIA's eagerness to hire newsmen to keep correspondents abroad cheaply.

Loory said the CIA also subsidized **Encounter**, "the highbrow magazine published by the Congress for Cultural Freedom," and the West German magazine **Der Monat**.

6) **Penthouse** magazine charged that 23 employees of Copley News Service had worked simultaneously for the CIA and that the service "for years was operated in significant part as an arm of the Central Intelligence Agency."[44] The charge covered both the California-based newspaper group and its domestic and Latin American news service. Copley News Service denied the charge.

Reaction of Media

Following the Jack Anderson column in the fall of 1973, the Washington **Star** reported on Nov. 30 of that year that more than three dozen American journalists working abroad had CIA connections.

Immediately, several news organizations contacted then-Director William Colby and asked him if any of their employees were being used by the CIA. According to Loory, they received different answers. But, since most of the inquiring journalists did not discuss their checks with others, they did not realize they were getting different answers. "Thus," Loory said, "they did not realize that the various CIA responses might warrant further investigation within their news organizations."[45]

According to Loory, only the New York **Times** received assurances from Colby that neither its staffers nor its stringers were working for the CIA. Colby assured Katharine Graham (publisher of the Washington **Post**) that none of her staff members were on his payroll. He refused to discuss stringers.

In addition, **Time**, **Newsweek**, **U. S. News and World Report** and the Washington **Star-News** were all assured personally by Colby that none of their full-time staffers was employed by the agency. And in each instance (except for U. S. **News**, which has no stringers), Colby explicitly refused to discuss stringers.

Loory said United Press International and CBS could not get beyond the CIA's press contact.

Loory also accused the media of failure to investigate the CIA's use of the news business.

> The lack of reaction to the **Star-News** story is an indication that the news business — reporters, editors, publishers and other executives alike — did not probe the specifics of the CIA infiltration for fear of what might be learned, and published.[46]

A year and a half later, the same issue was addressed, this time by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (2-4-76).

> . . . Above all, now that partial disclosures have been made, the press bears a heavy responsibility — the more so since it so frequently concerns itself with the ethics of others in business and government — not to close its eyes to what has happened but to turn its investigative energies into discovering by whom and to what extent journalism has been lent to spying.

Meanwhile, Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists, called on the Ford Administration to instruct the CIA and the FBI to end their working arrangements with journalists.

By February, 1976, eight news organizations claimed that the CIA had assured them that none of their reporters was among the full-time journalists said to be doubling as agents in 1973: the New York Times, the Associated Press, the Wall Street Journal, Time, Washington Post, Newsweek, ABC News and CBS News. However, most of these news organizations said they were unable to obtain similar assurances about CIA contacts with part-time journalists or stringers.

Since the CIA refused to reveal the names of both full- and part-time journalists who had worked (or were working) for the agency, several news organizations requested the information under the Freedom of Information Act. The information was not released.

During and following the House and Senate Intelligence Committees' investigations of CIA activities, the press gave emphasis to the subject, but by and large it simply covered what the congressmen were finding, and editorialized on that, rather than developing efforts of its own. Slowly the issue was forgotten and today, except for a few occasional stories, the subject seems to be condemned to silence.

At the time, the Washington Post (5-14-76) described the attitude of the press as being, "If we pretend that this little internal scandal doesn't exist, maybe it will go away."

Gilbert Cranberg, in the Des Moines Register (6-12-76), said that

> The CIA should quit planting false and misleading stories abroad, not just to protect Americans from propaganda fallout, but to protect all readers from misinformation. This government should not deliberately deceive foreign readers any more than it should deceive its own people.

Cranberg suggested the creation of an international "anti-media pollution ordinance."

The executive board of the National Conference of Editorial Writers passed a resolution opposing the clandestine CIA employment of any journalists, American or foreign, and noting the polluting effect of CIA material planted in the media anywhere in the world.

In June, 1976, the National News Council requested a meeting with George Bush, the CIA director. Bush told the members of the council (New York Times, 6-26-76) that the CIA was ending its association with all part-time correspondents affiliated with American news agencies abroad and would no longer hire them as agents.

In a September 21 news release, the council said:

> . . . the National News Council accepts the assurances of the Central Intelligence Agency that it has decided, as a matter of policy, to end the employment of American newsmen, and that all remaining instances of such employment will in fact cease within a reasonable time. . . . We specifically note that the CIA has not given such assurances with respect to foreign newsmen, nor has the Council expressed any opinion concerning this practice.

Editor & Publisher stressed the "disastrous" effect of the CIA activities in the press on the reputation of U. S. news services and their representatives abroad, and pointed out the possible causal relationship between the revelation of those links and the formation of a Third World News Agency Pool.[47]

Howard Bray, in The Progressive, raised important points:

> . . . the press is not out of the swamp on this issue.
>
> First, we have only the agency's word that it has forsaken the use of American journalists for intelligence operations. This policy can be expediently and secretly reversed. No Federal law bars the CIA, the FBI or other national security bureaucracies from using the press for their own purposes.
>
> Second, the CIA still enjoys license to employ non-American news organizations and journalists to spy and propagandize. . . . The risk of pollution of domestic media, inadvertently or by design, persists. . . .[48]

In his article, Bray mentioned that the Los Angeles Times and the San Diego Union were "the only newspapers, to my knowledge," that editorially called for the public revelation of names of journalists involved with the CIA, in order to restore the credibility of the vast majority of journalists.

The New York Times said (4-12-77) that the CIA's 1967 assurance that it would "under no circumstances" publish books, magazines or newspapers in the United States has proved to be inadequate. "Even if the CIA keeps hands off American publications, foreign publications have a way of getting here," the Times said.

Charles Seib said in the Washington Post (6-4-77) that

> . . . for Americans to profess a belief in human rights and yet tolerate the corruption of the press of other countries by an agency of the U. S. government could only be seen, around the world, as the grossest hypocrisy. And that is what it would be.

Conclusions

The full extent of the CIA-press relationship may never be disclosed, since the agency has repeatedly refused to make public its files concerning the subject. However, there does seem to be substantial evidence of CIA involvement with the media.

This involvement presents difficult ethical questions for the journalist. Where is the point at which autonomy of the press becomes endangered? When does the CIA cease being a source of information and start "using" the press? The answers to these questions are quite different today (after the Vietnam war and Watergate) from what they were, say, in the 1950's, at the height of the Cold War.

The disclosures about CIA use of the press, American and foreign, for propaganda or information-gathering, elicited three main kinds of response in the United States:

1) Silence or timidity, by some of the media that were involved, since they had knowingly collaborated with the agency and did not want the dirty linen to be washed in public.

2) A chauvinistic reaction, by those who were angry only because American media were being used, because the American people were being propagandized. Those who adopted this position were not much concerned with the CIA's polluting information abroad. Among them are the Pike committee (which recommended that the CIA only be

forbidden to use the American media for propaganda or cover) and the New York Times (which said that the CIA's publishing of material in other languages "may at times be in this nation's interest"). As a matter of fact, the Pike committee left room for the CIA to operate even in the U. S. when it recommended that intelligence agencies should not use "any journal or electronic media with general circulation in the United States" (emphasis added).

The National News Council also can be placed in this category, since it opposed the use of American journalists by the CIA, but did not take a position as far as the use of foreign journalists by the agency was concerned.

3) The "democracy above all" position, by those who think that the United States should not adopt a double-standard stance in this issue, and who believe that CIA interference in the press (American or foreign) subverts the principles for which the U. S. stands. Among those who seem to support this position are the Washington Post, the Des Moines Register and the National Conference of Editorial Writers.

The position of the Church committee is harder to define. The fact that it dedicated one section of its report to the CIA-American media relationship, and none to CIA-foreign media, indicates that it was more concerned with the first issue. When it said that "covert action should be considered as an exception to the normal process of government action abroad, rather than a parallel but invisible system in which covert operations are routine,"[49] it leaned toward the "democracy above all" position. But this position, that covert action "should be reserved for extraordinary circumstances when no other means will suffice,"[50] leaves a door open for the CIA to operate abroad. So, the Church committee is somewhere in-between the second and third positions.

One point that raised controversy was the extent to which the CIA would cease using American media for its operations. In his statement of Feb. 11, 1976, George Bush said that

> Effective immediately, the CIA will not enter into any paid or contractual relationship with any full-time or part-time news correspondent accredited by any U. S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio or television network or station.[51]

Two months later, the Church committee report was published, saying that

> Of the approximately 50 U. S. journalists or personnel of U. S. media organizations who were employed by the CIA or maintained some other covert relationship with the CIA at the time of the (Bush's) announcement, fewer than one-half will be terminated under the new CIA guidelines.[52]

The explanation given was that the prohibition did not extend to the use of "unaccredited" Americans serving in U. S. media organizations, free-lance writers, stringers or occasional correspondents for these news organizations, as well as correspondents working for smaller, technical or specialized publications.

This revelation raised cries of "double talk" by the CIA, and the whole question seemed to be exactly what the CIA meant by a part-time correspondent or stringer.[53]

In June, 1976, George Bush met with the National News Council and offered them, according to a news council press release (9-21-76), "unequivocal" assurance that no American journalist would be hired in the future by the agency and that the agency's existing ties with such journalists would be phased out as soon as possible.

The crucial question seems to be: Is there any reason to believe the CIA, or are its promises simply another propaganda operation? Is their assurance enough to make us believe that it will not break its promise in the future? Unfortunately, evidence indicates just the opposite.

In 1967 the CIA had already promised, "We will, under no circumstances, publish books, magazines or newspapers in the United States."[54] But there have been charges that this promise was broken after 1967. For example, the Church report says that, between August 1967 and May 1974, the U. S.-based executive of a major U. S. newspaper was contacted by the CIA. CIA materials on the subject said that

> It was visualized that . . . propaganda (if agreeable to him) might be initially inserted in his paper and then be available for reprinting by Latin American news outlets. . . .[55]

Although the same document says that there was no evidence that the newspaper agreed to publish CIA propaganda, the intentions of the agency are clear. And to claim that the CIA did not break its 1967 promise in this case because it did not publish a newspaper in America, but simply tried to insert propaganda in a newspaper, is a mere exercise in rhetorical hypocrisy.

In the fall of 1973, Colby said that the "CIA will undertake no activity in which there is a risk of influencing domestic public opinion, either directly or indirectly."[56] But, in 1974, the CIA-commissioned book **Chile's Marxist Experiment** (by Robert Moss, a British journalist), began to be sold in the U. S.

Also, the charges that the CIA subsidized indirectly the American communist paper **The Daily Worker** show the agency's intentions of propagandizing the American people.

The fact is that the CIA has an interest in propagandizing the American people, in order to get support for its own policies. And if it can get respected voices from the academic world or from the media to reinforce its points of view, so much the better. When these practices are disclosed, the agency promises publicly that it will stop them. But, once the spotlights are moved somewhere else, and the agency has secrecy in its favor again, the old practices seem to be resumed.

In May of 1977, Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, assured members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors that the CIA

> will not enter into any paid or contractual relationship with any full-time or part-time news correspondent accredited with any U. S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio-TV network or station.[57]

"That includes stringers," the senator said. He also said that this restriction would be included in the proposed statutory charters that the Senate Intelligence Committee is drafting for the CIA.

When an editor noted his use of the future tense to describe the end of the arrangements, Sen. Inouye admitted that the practice, though on its way out, still existed.[58] No information (on whether it was stopped or not) has been made available since then.

Two important indirect consequences derive from the CIA's using the American press. When it uses American newsmen as a cover, for espionage purposes, it throws a shadow of doubt over all American newsmen operating abroad and leaves room for incidents such as the one that happened to Los Angeles Times correspondent Robert Toth, who was expelled from Russia for allegedly spying.

When the CIA uses American media for propaganda, it gives ammunition to those who want to form a Third World News Agency Pool. Charges have been made that AP and UPI are propagandistic and, even assuming their innocence (despite Bernstein's assertions), they will be suspect nevertheless, since other news agencies (such as Reuters) have

been accused of serving the CIA.

Also, the United States can be charged with hypocrisy, since it preaches separation between press and government, but does not practice this itself.

As far as the CIA's manipulation of the foreign press is concerned, the situation is quite different, and there are far more remote chances that it will be stopped. The agency has repeatedly stated its intentions to continue its policies abroad, and Congress has been reluctant to take a firm position against it. Both the Pike and the Church committees left room for the CIA to manipulate information abroad and the Senate Intelligence Committee is still considering the subject, even though it has already declared itself against CIA use of American media.

Sen. Daniel Inouye said during the ASNE convention this year that he too was concerned with the "flow-back" problem of placements made by intelligence agencies abroad, and that he had met with Admiral Stansfield Turner and his associates on the matter. He said:

> The Committee will make a thorough review of this question. . . . This is the kind of issue that goes to the heart of the balancing question between the needs of secret intelligence activities, and the need to protect and nurture institutions of freedom such as a vigorous free press.[59]

So the Senate Intelligence Committee has not yet decided what to do about the CIA's use of the foreign media (or at least it has not yet announced its decision).

The consequences for the American public of this manipulation of information abroad are important. The risk of fallout increases as the number of American foreign correspondents decreases. (According to the Boston Globe of 4-22-77, this number dropped from 929 in 1969 to 676 in 1975 and is still decreasing.) As there are fewer channels for international news, each one of them assumes a greater role, and the pollution of any of them has a greater impact on the world.

When the CIA uses foreign media, it contributes to the discredit of the institution of the press throughout the world. Once some media are used for propaganda purposes, all media become suspect.

The French social and political philosopher Jacques Ellul said, ". . . it would be even worse to entertain any illusions about a co-existence of true democracy and propaganda."[60]

FOOTNOTES

1. **Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate,** three volumes (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1976).
2. **Ibid.,** Book I, p. 191.
3. **Ibid.,** p. 192.
4. In 1967, President Johnson organized a committee composed of Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach, HEW Secretary John Gardner and CIA Director Richard Helms to review government activities that might "endanger the integrity and independence of the educational community."
5. **Final Report,** p. 194.
6. According to the glossary of the **Final Report,** "proprietaries" is "a term used by the CIA to designate ostensibly private commercial entities capable of doing business which are established and controlled by intelligence services to conceal governmental affiliation of intelligence personnel and/or governmental sponsorship of certain activities in support of clandestine operations."
7. **Final Report,** p. 195.
8. **Ibid.,** p. 197.
9. **Ibid.,** p. 200.
10. The glossary of the **Final Report** defines "black propaganda" as "propaganda which purports to emanate from a source other than the true one."
11. **Final Report,** p. 201.
12. **Ibid.**
13. **Ibid.,** p. 448.
14. **Village Voice,** Feb. 16 and 23, 1976.
15. **Village Voice,** Feb. 16, p. 84.
16. **Ibid.,** p. 88.
17. **Ibid.**
18. **Ibid.**
19. **Ibid.**
20. **Ibid.**
21. **Ibid.**
22. **Ibid.,** p. 90.
23. **Ibid.,** p. 88.
24. **Ibid.**
25. **Ibid.,** pp. 88-89.
26. Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, **The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence** (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974).
27. **Ibid.,** pp. 157-58.
28. **Ibid.,** pp. 159-60.
29. **Ibid.,** p. 162.
30. **Ibid.,** p. 164.
31. **Ibid.,** p. 165.
32. **Ibid.**
33. **Ibid.,** p. 166.
34. **Ibid.,** p. 174.
35. **Ibid.,** p. 377.
36. Philip Agee, **Inside the Company — CIA Diary** (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1976).
37. **Ibid.,** pp. 620-45.
38. **Ibid.,** p. 468.
39. Carl Bernstein, "The CIA and the Media," **Rolling Stone,** Oct. 20, 1977, pp. 55-67.
40. **Ibid.,** pp. 55-56.
41. **Ibid.,** pp. 57-58.
42. Julius Mader, **Who's Who in CIA** (1066 Berlin W 66, Mauerstrasse 69, 1968), p. 560-B.
43. Stuart H. Loory, "The CIA's Use of the Press: a 'Mighty Wurlitzer,'" **Columbia Journalism Review,** September-October, 1974, p. 9.
44. Joe Trento and Dave Roman, "The Spies Who Came In From the Newsroom," **Penthouse,** August, 1977, p. 45.
45. Loory, p. 11.
46. **Ibid.,** p. 18.
47. "Influencing the News," **Editor & Publisher,** July 24, 1976, p. 4.
48. Howard Bray, "Journalists as Spooks," **The Progressive,** February, 1977, pp. 9-10.
49. **Final Report,** p. 447.
50. **Ibid.,** p. 448.
51. **Ibid.,** p. 195.
52. **Ibid.**
53. "Influencing the News," p. 4.
54. **Final Report,** p. 194.
55. **Ibid.,** p. 199.
56. **Ibid.,** p. 196.
57. Text of address by Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii, Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, before the American Society of Newspaper Editors, May 2, 1977, p. 18.
58. **ASNE Bulletin,** May-June, 1977, p. 9.
59. Address by Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, p. 18.
60. Jacques Ellul, **Propaganda — the Formation of Men's Attitudes** (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. xvi.